

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELFAS 00090 301820Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20

HA-05 /082 W

-----014889 310323Z /62

R 301757Z MAY 78

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1905

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS BELFAST 090

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, UK, EI

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND: RELAXATION IN

LONDONDERRY

1. RELAXATION IN DERRY. THE CITY CENTER OF LONDONDERRY WAS OPENED FOR VEHICULAR TRAFFIC LAST WEEK. THE MOVE WAS A SIGNIFICANT RELAXATION OF SECURITY RESTRICTIONS IN NI'S SECOND CITY, WHICH ALSO HAS BEEN BELFAST'S NEAREST RIVAL IN TERMS OF VIOLENCE. MOTORISTS ARE NOW ABLE TO DRIVE THROUGHOUT THE CITY, ALTHOUGH PARKING RESTRICTIONS DOWNTOWN ARE SEVERE AND SPOT CHECKS WILL BE MADE.

2. SEVERAL TOWNS TOOK SIMILAR ACTION EARLY IN THE YEAR, DESPITE THE THEN ONGOING BLAST INCENDIARY BOMB CAMPAIGN OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA. IN EVIDENT REACTION, A COUPLE OF CAR BOMBS WERE SET OFF, BUT THE RELAXATIONS REMAINED. SIMILARLY, OVER THE MAY 27-29 LONG WEEKEND PIRA USED CASSETTE-TYPE INCENDIARIES TO DESTROY A NUMBER OF POST OFFICE VEHICLES IN DERRY AND PLANTED SOME HOAX BOMBS, BUT DID NOT DISRUPT SIGNIFICANTLY THE CITY'S WEEK-LONG CIVIC FESTIVAL.

3. OTHER ACTIONS: DURING THE SAME WEEKEND IN BELFAST,  
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PIRA DESTROYED A SMALL ENGINEERING FIRM WITH INCENDIARIES. AS IN THE ATTACK IN DERRY, A NUMBER OF THE INCENDIARIES DID NOT GO OFF. PIRA ALSO USED BOMBS TO DAMAGE A FAVORITE TARGET OVER THE YEARS: THE FIRST BRIDGE A HALF MILE NORTH OF THE BORDER ON THE DUBLIN-BELFAST RAIL LINE. THE RAILWAY WAS WARNED, AND PASSENGERS WERE REROUTED BY BUS DURING THE WEEKEND. AFTER ANOTHER WARNING, ARMY EXPERTS

FOUND AND DISPOSED OF TWO OTHER BOMBS PLANTED ON THE LINE.

4. DURING THE PAST COUPLE OF WEEKS, THERE WAS A FRACAS IN A BELFAST DRINKING CLUB INVOLVING PARATROOPERS, A MURDER ATTEMPT IN BELFAST AGAINST A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER (HE WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED), AND SOME MARGINAL STREET VIOLENCE. PIRA ALSO TRIED TO GET A POLICE VEHICLE NEAR THE SOUTHERN BORDER, BUT THE MINE WAS DETONATED AFTER THE LAND ROVER HAD PASSED.

5. COMMENT: THE RELATIVE LULL IN ATTACKS THUS CONTINUES. THE BOMBS ON THE RAILROAD ARE A FAVORITE HARRASSING TACTIC. WE DO NOT RECALL THAT ANYONE HAS BEEN HURT ON THE DUBLIN-BELFAST RUN IN RECENT YEARS. THE VARIOUS ATTACKS OVER THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND ARE DISQUIETING BUT DO NOT NECESSARILY INDICATE A RESUMPTION OF INTENSE PIRA ACTIVITY. THE COVER IS NOT SO GOOD ON THESE LONG SUMMER DAYS.

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## Message Attributes

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